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From the Courrier des Etats Unis. Paris, 24 April.  
The approach of Summer has its usual influence on the city world; there are fewer balls. But, though they dance less, they do not at all abate in the passion for play.

Dancing is only a pleasure, a passion, and a passion which is never extinguished and whose consuming fire circulates incessantly in the veins of society, seeming from time to time to be consumed or to sleep only to revive with a more terrible ardor. We are now at one of these epochs of revival. They play now at Paris, as they have not since the Directory, when Society took up cards again after the harassing excitement of the Revolution. The fever of industrial speculation naturally brings on such a crisis; the air of the *Bourse* is contagious and penetrates every where, load-laden with corrupt miasma; from this centre are disseminated intoxicating fluids which trouble the reason, cause vertigo and produce a sort of hallucination which seems to place fortune within the reach of every one; then all strive to engage in these fertile and prompt chances which may bring riches without making any wait. Play becomes a devotion, a fury, a fanaticism. To satisfy the thirst it had excited, the scheme of Law required the aid of Farot; so our present speculations end in Languor.

How many disasters have happened during the gay meetings of the winter, while the Mazurka hid with the clatter of its spurs the sound of the gold rolling upon the gaming-tables. They play every where, and at all rates, in spite of the vigilance that tries to moderate these mad struggles. Occasions seemingly the most innocent serve as a pretext for these ruinous engagements. Some restaurants, perfectly furnished and brilliantly patronized, had become real gaming houses, after dinner, often after breakfast even, the guests ordered cards in private cabinets, and then spent all the day, all the night in gaming; often these struggles have been prolonged thirty-six hours in succession, without truce or repose, for those who have acquired this taste can dispense with sleep. Now a regulation interdicts cards to the restaurants, but this is a vain obstacle, which annoys the players but cannot stop them. The fight continues; though the ground must be changed.

To some, play is a recreation, but to others a profession. The *Afficionado*, after the grand war on Exchange during the day, refreshes himself at night by such skirmishes. The young man risks on it his income for the year. The poor play as if they were rich; the rich as if they were poor. These are the dupes round whom buzzes the swarm of sharps.

These gentlemen are entitled *Greeks*. Why this surname is given them, to the injury of the land which produced Sophocles, Leonidas and Aristides, we know not, but find ourselves compelled to accept the usage for convenience' sake.

The Parisian Greek is usually a man from twenty-five to thirty years of age, of an elegant appearance and good manners. He dresses with taste and wears handsome jewels. His whole establishment is that of a rich man, though all his revenue is gathered in at evening parties. He talks often of his property, his estates, but these consist of a field two feet square, on whose green carpet he sows gold to reap bank notes. By his easy air and lordly ways you would suppose him the son of an aristocratic stock, but he was, more probably, born in some poor's lodge. But education has formed him; study has untold his natural dispositions; he has begun by giving himself the airs of a dandy to get means for keeping up the profession. Once launched in the world, the handsome envelope suffices to secure him a good reception, and with the privileges of familiar intercourse in many houses; for how is it possible to distrust a young man who presents himself so gracefully? What could be demanded that he does not possess? His coats are exquisitely made; a fine diamond sparkles in the knot of his cravat; his hair is well arranged; but, above all, his hands are well taken care of; his nails are kept very long, because this is not only fashionable, but peculiarly useful to him; a little streak with the nail adroitly given to the back of a card aids in recognizing on its passage the mysterious ace, and the kings who turn their backs.

There is also the Greek of mature age, of from forty-five to fifty years. He is less elegant, less the petit-maitre, but he has other means of success. He wears thick moustaches and several crosses he has served in the army; he is very brave, and an admirable shot, a talent which imposes respect and helps him to make acquaintance. They go out to shoot, the wagers in champagne at first—Comptroller with the pistol, the cavalier offers a revenge with the cards, of which he has in his pocket a pack made in a particular manner. They accept, and if there is any hesitation on the part of the victim to pay what results, the pistol comes into play again.

You ask if these things pass only with closed doors, in the secret haunts of Hazard. No! but in the most fashionable circles, of which the young Greek is the admired dandy, and to which the old Greek is admitted on the score of his crosses and his title of Baron.